

Wei-wu-erh ladies bother with the convention of the veil, however, and some merely keep it thrown off the face and trailing down the back. 291

Good food is the watchword of the Wei-wu-erh of Kashgar, and his restaurants and shops are well provided. An abundance of melons, mulberries, plums, pears, pomegranates, peaches, and apricots, are seasonably available; and they are sold from open stalls in the local bazaar. *Manzu*, a dish of small meat dumplings, is a favorite repast, and there is also an abundance of steaming soups, fresh salad greens, and a local style of doughnut. The principal diet is, however, mutton and rice. This is accompanied by cooked onions, turnips, spinach, or potatoes. The common man usually partakes of only two meals a day, but feasts have been known to begin in early morning and to end only at sunset. [264] What delightful, varied-tasting Chinese dishes can be served at Kashgar banquets! A few samples of such festive dishes are: ducks'-egg soup, stags' tendons, sharks' fins, bamboo shoots, wild duck, preserved eggs, all manner of pungent sauces, roasted mutton, sweet-sour fish, and many, many kinds of chicken—boned, broiled, roasted, fried in quarters, chopped, and sliced and fried in strips.

There are also many types of Wei-wu-erh entertainment. In the narrow streets a fortune-teller, sitting cross-legged, will ever be ready to promise good fortune for a few cents. The tea-shop, where the Wei-wu-erh, unlike the Han Chinese, drinks his tea with sugar, is another congenial spot. Theaters were for a long time unknown, but a Chinese performance is nowadays a pleasant diversion; and Soviet motion pictures have also been brought to town. There is dancing, too, but it is not the kind common to the Occident; and it is for the men. Only in rare instances do the women join in the dance. Kite-flying is popular with the young Wei-wu-erh, while the most strenuous sport for the adults is the game of *ulagh*. This is played on horseback in teams and has a distant resemblance to polo; the object, though, is to retrieve the carcass of a goat or a sheep. It is a wild, uproarious, racing *melee*, and the source of endless excitement and laughter. 517 [272] [545] [535] [526]

"Han" Chinese

Tu Chung-yüan states that the "ruling" Chinese (he calls them "Han" by way of contrast to the rest of the population) constitute about 162

467 Kōk Moinak pass (15,400 feet) which was quite free of snow. There was only one serious obstacle on the way up, and that was within a couple of miles of the Darshart camping-place. The path had been entirely washed away by the stream, which cascaded for a hundred yards between perpendicular walls, and it was further partially blocked by masses of ice jutting out over the stream-bed. It took us, working hard, over an hour to get the caravan up through these narrows. Our camp that night, at 14,500 feet on the Chichiklik ("speckled," i.e. flowery) plateau, was the highest we had yet had.

From Chichiklik the shortest route to Toilebulung is down through the Tangitar or "Dark Gorge," which from all accounts is well named, so narrow and dark is it and so rough and boulder-strewn the stream-bed. In the high-water season it is dangerous, and we preferred to go two marches round by the Yambulak *Jilgha* (valley). On the way we crossed the Yangi Davan (New Pass) the top of which was covered with wide but firm-surfaced snow-fields and proved to be 16,100 feet above the sea. This was the highest pass we crossed between Srinagar and Kashgar. From the top, to our surprise and delight, we saw below us to the north a beautiful lake of purest sapphire lapped in the snowy peaks at the head of the Yambulak valley. This lake is not shown on any map; it is quite half a mile broad and when we saw it was still, owing to the great elevation (15,500 feet), partially covered with the ice of winter.

In the Yambulak *Jilgha* we made our first acquaintance with unspoilt, off-the-beaten-track Kirghiz of the type we were afterwards to know and like so well. Five miles down from the pass, in the middle of one of the sudden but short-lived summer blizzards of the Pamirs, we found the headman of the little community, Ibrahim Beg, and his son Juma waiting for us with tea and a small carpet spread out on the wet ground. Politeness dictated a halt of at least five minutes while we made a pretence of sipping the salty tea (the Kirghiz cannot afford sugar in their tea, so they use salt, though they much prefer their tea sweet) and felt the snowflakes insinuating themselves down our necks. Two miles further down at a height of 12,650 feet, we came to the *aq-ois*, pitched on either side of the brawling stream in a sheltered bend of the valley. The afternoon sun now shone strongly again, and as we passed the first huts its rays illumined exquisitely an idyllic scene—three or four Kirghiz girls in their quaint dresses and turbans

[622]

• [272]
[263]

/The New Uighurs/

563 songs of poverty and exile, and popular songs of various kinds.
[533] The New Uighurs are great believers in the efficacy of local
[1776] saints, and there are innumerable shrines all over their region
[178] dedicated to saints and heroes.

2. Patterns of living

563 a. Dwelling

342 Most of the people live in small mud houses called *dy*, or
[184] sometimes *hānā*, which resemble the simple earth, stone and
reed-mat homes of the poor farmers of North China. Rich people live in well-built houses with courtyards and gardens.

The typical design of the house is a flat roof upon which small openings are left to serve as windows. The windowframes are equipped with folding shutters, and are closed at night during the winter. The window openings are so small they admit [354] little light, and the interior is always in semi-darkness. Floor [352] and walls are packed with reed mats and earth. The rear of the room is set apart by a partition of squared beams, and has a raised floor. This elevated section, its floor covered with reed mats and thick felt, serves as the bed and also the dining table. Most of the family's time at home is spent on this elevation. The door of the house is so low that one must bend down to pass through it. Almost every room has a chimney.

[251] The flat-topped roof of the house is used for drying grain and other agricultural products. Each house also has a veranda on [352] which plank beds are constructed for use during the summer. Couches of wood or clay under the trees also serve as sleeping accommodations during hot weather. A house with a courtyard [351] is surrounded by a wall of earth. In the southern area, the gardens [184] of the homes are surrounded by hedges.

b. Food

563 Wheat and corn are the staple foods of the people. Rice is a
262 luxury used only for entertaining and festival occasions. Meat is preferred to vegetables, and mutton to beef. Chickens, ducks and other fowl are eaten, but not considered especially desirable. The famous Turfan raisins and Hami (Qomul) melons supply large quantities of fresh fruits for these people. Mare's milk [272] is drunk extensively, and the noble drink called kumis, horse [273] milk wine, is considered the most healthful of all sour milk concoctions.

563 For entertaining, camel and horse meat, beef and mutton are
262 served with fresh fruits, crystalized sugar and kumis. Meats
252 may be boiled or roasted. The most common dishes are grilled mutton and kidney, and cold boiled mutton and liver with bread. The favorite dish, called pilav, is made of the fattest mutton or beef cut into small pieces and cooked with rice, chopped carrot, onion, garlic and seedless raisins, cooked in a large cauldron. [264] Liquid foods are eaten with wooden spoons. Other foods, including thick porridge and pilav, are eaten with the fingers.

HEALTH AND SANITATION

^S N 128 I. Introduction

For the purposes of this section the region has been divided into three groups: (1) the Turkic people of Sinkiang (including the Eastern Turks, Kirghiz and Kazakhs), (2) the Tibetans of Chinghai and (3) the Chinese of the Northwest (including both Hans and Moslems).

^S
751
164 Measured by Western standards, the area as a whole lacks most modern facilities for maintaining high standards of health and sanitation. The shortage of trained personnel in the fields of medicine, dentistry and nursing is quite acute. These conditions may be due partly to the geographical location of the area, being in the deep hinterland, away from the center of China, and generally lacking a sufficient water supply. The common man's ignorance of the basic facts of health and sanitation contributes greatly to the spread of disease and to the lack of precautionary measures against the occurrence of certain diseases.

However, the local population, while living under what we consider unsanitary conditions, has built immunities to many diseases, to which a Westerner, living under the same conditions, would easily succumb. Some habits that we consider dangerous in spreading disease may actually be without any harmful consequences to the local people.

II. The Turkic Peoples of Sinkiang

^S 262 563 A. The Diet of the Turkic People

The daily diet of the sedentary Eastern Turks consists mostly of mutton and rice, with vegetables, both boiled and fried, including onions, potatoes, turnips, carrots and spinach, many forms of soups, and pilaus. Tea is the staple beverage, served with sugar and without milk. Bread, in the shape of circular rolls indented at the top, constitutes an important item in the diet. A variety of fruits, including melons, apples, pears, apricots, peaches, nectarines, pomegranates, plums, cherries, and mulberries, grow in profusion in Turkestan and are abundant during the summer.

^S
264
262
184
565
563
[539] The common people eat only twice during the day; in the morning and in the evening. The wealthy people frequently have feasts and eat a great abundance and variety of foods. Many of them suffer from abnormal obesity as a result of overeating and lack of exercise. A common proverb in Sinkiang warning against the folly of this type of behavior is the following, "He who eats sparingly eats ten times, but he who eats too much eats but once."

^S
563
262
[292] The diet of the Kirghiz and the Kazakhs, the nomadic Turks, differs somewhat from that of the sedentary Eastern Turks. Their diet is composed mainly of milk and mutton. From flour and

/Tibetans of Chingahi/

N
75
*563
gories and the apportionment of the traditional Buddhist 404 is not standardized.) There are further breakdowns of what might go wrong with what aspects of the human body and the human mind or spirit, to the point where each infinitesimal ailment has its own specific cause and cure, or impossibility of curing. The medicinal treatments involve acupuncture, plasters, herbs, roots, crushed bone, excreta, potions, incantations and numerous other elements. It is a very complex system. When a Tibetan needs medical aid, he must first seek out a lama, present him with a scarf and a gift, and have this lama (who is not a doctor) cast the dice. The dice reveal the portion of the canon that contains reference to the manpa who is needed. The manpa, or specialist, may turn out to be a Christian medical missionary who has been successful in effecting cures (cf. Rijnhart, pp. 163-64). Sometimes there may be some suspicion of fee-splitting. Generally the prescriptions and treatment bear little relation to our own medical knowledge. However, the Tibetans are pragmatists and will seek their cures from those who have established a reputation for success, be they Westerners, Tibetan Buddhist or Bon doctors, or any others. Wherever Western medical science has filtered through, few Tibetans hesitate to make use of it, often simultaneously with their own. Mongol medical science is derived from the Tibetan Buddhist sources. However, more particular Mongol data on health and sanitation can be found in the IMAR Handbook.

N
[177]

III. The Chinese

N
*563
262
A. The Diet of the Chinese

[272] The Chinese diet does not contain milk or any milk products. The usual beverage is tea. The principal animals raised for food are pigs, chickens and ducks. In the Northwest, however, mutton has become a very common dish. The Moslems substitute beef for pork. In the Northwest the main grain products are wheat and millet. Rice is also eaten in abundance, being brought generally from southern and central China. Most proteins are derived from soybeans, peanuts and sweet potatoes. The food prepared for special feasts, and the kind eaten by the upper classes, differs considerably from the average Chinese meal, consisting of at least four-fifths meat, fish or fowl. The Chinese method of cooking preserves the vitamins contained in the vegetables, since they are never permitted to linger over the fire or in water.

S
N
[252]

N
*563
S
563
[146]
S
N
[751]
B. Chinese Concepts of Disease

Most of the people do not know the different values of the various food products. Although many might wish to improve their daily diet with more meats and fish, they cannot afford to do so. The people in general, and particularly in the Northwest, have no

THE CELESTIAL MOUNTAINS

237

We left Muleiho as soon as the weather permitted. 272
Our Shansi friends were round early to see how we had fared, and to bring us a parting present of a slab of brick-tea, one foot wide by one and a half feet long, and two inches thick—a most decorative object, being stamped with handsome patterns. Brick-tea is much used in the North-West. A small chunk is broken off and boiled in a kettle of water, making an infusion which is of a pale colour and nearly tasteless. The bricks are made from the used leaves of the tea-shops, sun-dried and pressed into a cake.

The next two days took us past Chitai—'Great Height'—where we stayed in the suburb, the town itself being nothing but a mass of ruins inside a good castellated wall. We took our next stage by day, crossing the area which had received the full force of the cloud-burst on Sunday night. On every hand we saw the traces of the havoc wrought. Bridges were swept away, trees uprooted and crops ruined, and we were told that a large number of cattle had been drowned, as the rushing mountain torrent burst its bounds and had overtaken the herds before their owners could get them to a place of safety. From Chitai we came to Kucheng—'Ancient City'—which unlike Hami is not surrounded on all sides with fertile land, but is approached over a wide, sandy and treeless plain. From out of the howling wilderness we stepped direct into a large town, which appeared to us a veritable metropolis. Many large shops showed a splendid assortment of such glittering wares as the Chinese love—china cups and teapots, perfumes and scented soap, silks and cottons, clocks and hair-clasps. The tailors sat at their shop doors working Singers' sewing-machines, the Moslem bakers piled the hot rolls on counters as they drew them out of the brick oven, and the vege-